



BIPOC GAME STUDIES CONFERENCE 2027

Press Kit

Conference on BIPOC Game Studies (C-BIPOC)

January 14–15, 2027 · University of Miami · Coral Gables, Florida

bipocgames.com · chair@blackgamestudies.org

About the Conference

The Conference on BIPOC Game Studies (C-BIPOC) is a first-of-its-kind academic and professional gathering dedicated to amplifying the voices, scholarship, creativity, and lived experience of Black, Indigenous, Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI), and People of Color communities within gaming — as players, creators, scholars, and subjects of study.

C-BIPOC sits at the intersection of **academic inquiry, creative practice, and industry leadership**. It brings together peer-reviewed research, curated game showcases, dynamic industry keynotes, and open community conversations — all in service of a gaming culture that is more inclusive, representative, and responsive to the full breadth of human experience.

The conference is made possible through the generous support of **The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation**.

"This conference is the culmination of ongoing efforts to shine a light on existing work that has too often been overlooked and to preserve the stories and practices of BIPOC game creators for future generations." — Dr. Lindsay Grace, Conference Co-Chair

Why Support C-BIPOC

Gaming is one of the world's largest cultural industries — and yet Black, Indigenous, AAPI, and People of Color scholars, developers, and communities remain chronically underrepresented in its discourse, design, and leadership. C-BIPOC exists to change that.

This conference is not just an academic event. It is a deliberate act of community building, knowledge preservation, and cultural advocacy. The work presented here — from peer-reviewed research to playable showcases — shapes how the games industry and gaming scholarship understand culture, identity, equity, and justice.

Supporters, sponsors, and community partners who align with C-BIPOC are joining a growing, cross-sector movement that connects universities, independent studios, industry organizations, advocacy groups, and game-playing communities around a shared vision: a gaming world that reflects the richness and diversity of the world's people.



2025 Inaugural Conference — A Landmark Beginning

The first C-BIPOC conference exceeded all expectations, establishing a new home for this vital work.

Dates: September 12–14, 2025

Venue: The Strong National Museum of Play, Rochester, New York

By the Numbers

- Full peer-reviewed papers published with **Play Story Press**
- 9 conference themes across academic, creative, and professional tracks
- Presentations covering topics from Afrofuturism to cultural heritage preservation, decolonized game design, and racialized avatar embodiment in social VR
- A curated **game showcase** featuring digital and analog games by BIPOC creators
- **Panels and roundtables** spanning citational justice, Japanese American redress, Indigenous knowledge systems, esports equity, and more
- An **unconference** format creating space for emergent, community-led conversations

2025 Keynote Speakers

Stanley Pierre-Louis — President & CEO, Entertainment Software Association (ESA)

The leader of the U.S. video game industry's trade association, bringing an industry-level perspective on representation and equity.

Elizabeth Del Valle — Global Partnering Marketing Lead, YouTube Music and Premium

An award-winning marketing leader with nearly a decade at Google and experience across PlayStation, Google Play, and YouTube, with a track record of building community with creators of all kinds.

Elizabeth LaPensée, Ph.D. — Narrative Director, Twin Suns; Guggenheim Fellow

An award-winning designer, writer, and artist of Indigenous games and comics, inducted into the Global Women in Games Hall of Fame and recognized internationally for work like *Thunderbird Strike* and *When Rivers Were Trails*.

Guha Bala & Karthik Bala — President and CEO, Velan Studios / Velan Ventures

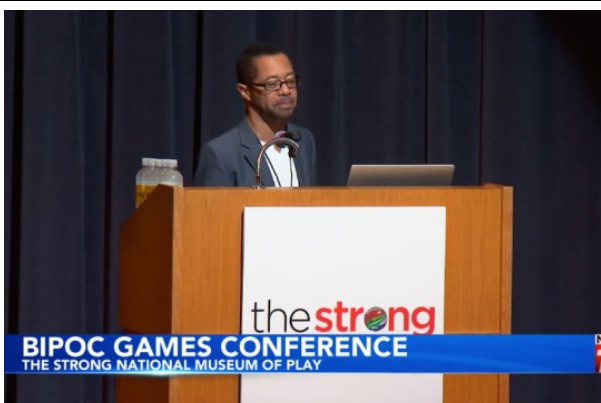
Co-founders of Velan Studios (*Mario Kart Live: Home Circuit*, *Knockout City*, *Midnight Murder Club*) and previously Vicarious Visions, whose products generated over \$4 billion in sales. Karthik serves on the Board of Trustees of The Strong Museum of Play.



Sample 2025 Research Topics

- *Racial representation and resistance in Detroit: Become Human and The Last of Us*
- Decolonizing game design frameworks
- Preserving Hmong cultural heritage through play
- Black feminist intervention through gaming
- Racialized avatar embodiment in social VR
- Virtual reality museums and cultural heritage
- Collegiate esports equity and access

Prior Press



- 2025: "[Do games shape our worldview? Strong Museum of Play goes deep with BIPOC game studies](#)", WXXI (Rochester NY, NPR Affiliate), Noelle E. C. Evans, September 16, 2025
- 2025: [Historic Rochester conference honors BIPOC gaming creators](#), WROC News 8, Rochester, New York, September 12, 2025.
- 2025: [Strong Museum kicks off first-ever conference on BIPOC Game Studies](#), WHEC News 10, Rochester, New York, September 12, 2025.

2027 Conference — What's Coming

Dates: January 14–15, 2027

Location: University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida

Conference Website: bipocgames.com

Building on the momentum of the inaugural event, the 2027 conference expands its scope to include an even broader lens — placing special emphasis on AAPI (Asian American and Pacific Islander) scholarship alongside Black and Indigenous game studies.

Conference Themes

C-BIPOC 2027 welcomes scholarly and creative work that intersects with any of the following themes:

- **Representation and Identity in Video Games** — How games represent BIPOC communities; identity formation and expression in digital and analog play.
- **Digital and Analog Games as Cultural Artifact** — Games as reflections of societal values, histories, and diasporic experiences.
- **Games By and About BIPOC Communities** — Games created by Black, Indigenous, and AAPI developers; critical perspectives on their portrayal.
- **Decolonizing Game Development and Design** — Strategies for resisting Western-centric design paradigms; case studies in decolonized design.
- **Indigenous, Black, and AAPI Knowledge Systems and Gaming** — Integration of diverse cultural knowledge into game narratives and mechanics.
- **Futurism and Gaming** — Afrofuturism, Indigenous futurisms, and Asian futurisms in game design and storytelling.
- **Cultural Preservation and Digital Heritage** — Gaming as a vehicle for preserving underrepresented communities' heritage.
- **Social Impact and Activism Through Games** — Games as tools for social change, addressing anti-BIPOC sentiment.
- **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Playful Technologies** — The state of DEI in the gaming industry; best practices for inclusive game development.

Submission Types

Format	Length	Deadline
Presentation Abstract	500–800 words	July 1, 2026
Full Paper	2,500–8,000 words	July 1, 2026
Panel Proposal	~800 words	July 1, 2026
Industry / Professional Talk	Form submission	July 15, 2026
Creative Showcase (games, playable media)	Submission form	July 15, 2026

Acceptance Notifications: September 1, 2026

Accepted abstracts and full papers are published in **conference proceedings with Play Story Press**. Full papers are additionally considered for publication in the **ACM Games: Research and Practice Journal**.

Travel Support: Five (5) travel support grants are available for emerging scholars with accepted papers or accepted industry talks who lack corporate travel funding. Awards are merit-based.

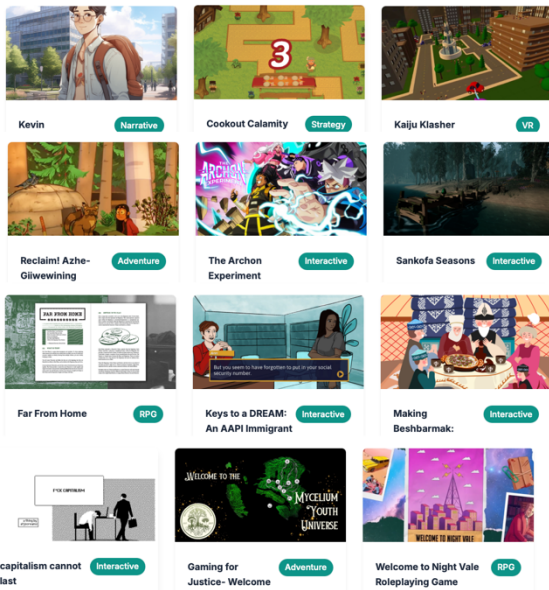


How to Get Involved

For Sponsors and Partners

C-BIPOC is actively seeking sponsors and organizational partners who believe in the power of games to shape culture, and who want to be part of the change. Your support enables:

- Travel grants for emerging BIPOC scholars and creators
- Publication of peer-reviewed proceedings accessible to the global scholarly community
- A game showcase that puts BIPOC-created games in front of scholars, industry professionals, and the public



- A conference that welcomes students, academics, independent developers, and industry voices in the same room

Sponsorship places your organization in front of a deeply engaged, cross-sector audience — university researchers, game designers and developers, industry professionals, students, and advocates who are shaping the future of game studies and game development.

To discuss sponsorship and partnership opportunities, please reach out:

Email: chair@blackgamestudies.org

Website: bipocgames.com

For Researchers, Creators, and Industry Professionals

We invite you to submit your work. C-BIPOC welcomes voices from across the spectrum — emerging scholars, established researchers, independent game developers, and industry professionals.

You do not need to be a member of BIPOC communities to submit work for peer review. Allies and advocates are welcome.

Submit papers, abstracts, and panels: easychair.org/conferences/?conf=bipocg2

Submit a game or creative showcase piece: forms.gle/jA7czhNSKPofaGRG9

Pitch an industry / professional talk: [Industry Talk Submission Form](#)

Questions about submissions: chair@blackgamestudies.org

For Community Leaders and Organizations

If your organization, newsletter, Discord, department, or network reaches people who care about games and equity — we'd love your help spreading the word. See the "Suggested Sharing Language" section below for ready-to-use templates.

Suggested Sharing Language

Short Announcement (Social Media — X, Bluesky, Mastodon)

The 2nd BIPOC Game Studies Conference is coming to Miami, Jan 14–15, 2027. Submit your research, showcase your game, or pitch an industry talk. Deadline for papers & abstracts: July 1, 2026. This is the space for BIPOC voices in game scholarship and design. bipocgames.com #BIPOCGameStudies #GameStudies #AAPI #IndigenousGames

Newsletter / List Announcement

Call for Submissions: BIPOC Game Studies Conference 2027 The Conference on BIPOC Game Studies (C-BIPOC) returns January 14–15, 2027 at the University of Miami in Coral Gables, Florida. Now in its second year, C-BIPOC is the leading academic and professional conference dedicated to the intersection of gaming culture and the experiences of Black, Indigenous, AAPI, and People of Color communities. The inaugural 2025 conference — held at the Strong National Museum of Play — brought together scholars, game developers, industry leaders, and advocates for three days of research, showcases, and community building. How to participate:

- *Submit a paper or abstract (deadline July 1, 2026)*
- *Propose a panel (deadline July 1, 2026)*
- *Showcase your game or playable work (deadline July 15, 2026)*
- *Pitch an industry talk (deadline July 15, 2026)*

Travel support grants are available for emerging scholars. All submission types welcome researchers, industry professionals, students, and allies. Learn more and submit at: bipocgames.com | Questions: chair@blackgamestudies.org

Department / University Listserv

Dear colleagues, I'm pleased to share information about the 2nd BIPOC Game Studies Conference (C-BIPOC), taking place January 14–15, 2027 at the University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida. This conference provides a dedicated venue for peer-reviewed scholarship, creative showcase, and industry dialogue focused on the experiences of Black, Indigenous, AAPI, and People of Color communities in gaming. Papers accepted for publication appear in conference proceedings (Play Story Press) and are additionally eligible for consideration in the ACM Games: Research and Practice Journal. Submission deadlines:

- *Papers and abstracts: July 1, 2026*
- *Creative Showcase and Industry Talks: July 15, 2026*

Five travel support grants are available for emerging scholars. Submit via EasyChair: <https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=bipocg2> Full details: <https://bipocgames.com/>

LinkedIn Post

The 2nd BIPOC Game Studies Conference (C-BIPOC) will take place January 14–15, 2027 at the University of Miami in Coral Gables, FL. This conference brings together scholars, game developers, industry professionals, and advocates to explore gaming through the lens of Black, Indigenous, AAPI, and People of Color experiences. Submission deadlines: Papers & Abstracts: July 1, 2026 Game Showcase & Industry Talks: July 15, 2026 Travel grants available for emerging scholars. Allies welcome to submit. Learn more: bipocgames.com | Submit: easychair.org/conferences/?conf=bipocg2 #GameStudies #BIPOC #AAPI #IndigenousGames #DiversityInGaming #AcademicConference

Conference Leadership

Conference Chairs

Dr. Lindsay Grace

Knight Chair in Interactive Media and Director of the MFA in Interactive Media

University of Miami School of Communication

Abbie Hamilton

Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) in Gaming

Organizing and Program Committee

Name	Affiliation
Krystal Cooper	Rochester Institute of Technology, IGME
Dr. Toiya Kristen Finley	Schnoodle Media, LLC (Independent)
Dr. Akil Fletcher	Princeton University
Stephen Jacobs	Rochester Institute of Technology (emeritus)
Theresa Loong	Vassar College and FORM360
Dr. TreaAndrea Russworm	University of Southern California
Dr. Aaron Trammell	University of California–Irvine
Lien Tran	DePaul University
Allen Turner	DePaul University
Carl Varnado	Black In Gaming
Dr. Gerald Voorhees	University of Waterloo

Key Dates at a Glance

Milestone	Date
Paper & Abstract Submission Deadline	July 1, 2026
Creative Showcase & Industry Talk Deadline	July 15, 2026
Acceptance Notifications	September 1, 2026
Conference	January 14–15, 2027

Contact and Links

Resource	Link
Conference Website	bipocgames.com
2027 Conference Page	bipocgames.com/index_2027.html and https://bipocgames.com/2027/
Paper , Abstract Submissions	easychair.org/conferences/?conf=bipocg2
Email	chair@blackgamestudies.org , L.Grace@miami.edu
2025 Proceedings	playstorypress.org https://doi.org/10.17613/5cvv9-41q73
Sponsor / Partner Inquiries	chair@blackgamestudies.org
Social Media	Visit bipocgames.com for current social links Social images for promotion at: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1LOidwgxdM946vjvfcOIEmsowhhuKAypJ?usp=share_link

The Conference on BIPOC Game Studies is supported by The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. Conference proceedings are published by Play Story Press and licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International.